the faster growth of non-agricultural sectors, which is generally observed in the process of economic development. However, Government have been implementing various programmes for increasing agricultural production and productivity, and as a consequence, contribution of agriculture to GDP in absolute terms has been showing an increasing trend.

National Seed Board

1790. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up National Seed Board;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government also propose to make it mandatory for seed companies to go through trials in ICAR approved labs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The draft Bill to replace the existing Seeds Act provides for the establishment of the National Seeds Board in replacement of the Central Seed Committee and Central Seed Certification Board.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Seeds of all kinds and varieties shall be subject to compulsory registration on the basis of information provided by the producer on the results of multi locational trials to establish Value for Cultivation and Usage.

Agriculture Policy for NER

1791. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farmers who attended a two-day semiar in Guwahati

on 14th June, 2002, had demanded the Central Government to formulate a special agriculture policy for the North-East, giving due stress to the resources in the region and the rich prospects for horticulture there; and

(b) if so, what decision has been taken to modify the agriculture policy or to lay down a special agricultural policy for the North-Eastern Region in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) A two day Seminar on "Agricultural Development of Assam" was held on 24th and 25th June, 2002 at Guwahati. Farmers attending the seminar in Guwahati had not demanded the Central Government to formulating a Agriculture Policy for North East.

(b) Does not arise.

Rice to Andhra Pradesh

1792. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government released five lakh tonnes of additional rice under Sampoorna Grameen Samruddhi Yojana (SGSY) for Andhra Pradesh in June, 2002; and

(b) if so, the details of rice released for distribution to Andhra Pradesh since August, 2001, under the Food for Work and Sampoorna Grameen Samruddhi Yojana and the demand made by the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir, under the Special Component of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY).

(b) Since 1st August, 2001, 31.50 lakh MTs. of Rice has been released, which fully meets the demand of the State Government.

Food for Work scheme in Andhra Pradesh

1793. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central team which toured Andhra Pradesh in May, 2002 recommended continuation of Food for Work scheme in the State;